

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 24, 2014

The Honorable Chuck Hagel
Secretary of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Hagel:

We write to express our support for the Federal Excess Personal Property Program (FEPP) and the Firefighter Property Program (FFP), and we ask that you take all steps necessary to ensure that recent decisions about the programs, which have led to considerable uncertainty about their future, are fully rescinded or otherwise addressed as soon as possible. As you know, on June 19, 2014, the Department of Defense (DoD), citing compliance issues with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions standards, issued questionable new guidelines that directly led to a suspension of the delivery of surplus firefighting equipment through the FEPP and the FFP. We strongly disagreed with the original decision to impose these new restrictions, and welcomed the news on July 9, 2014, that DoD had ended their unnecessary and unwarranted suspension of these critical programs.

While we were encouraged to see the DoD take steps to reverse what would have been a highly disruptive change in policy, the circumstances and unanswered questions behind the original decisions continue to concern us. We look forward to your response to the letter sent by Senator John McCain and 24 other United States Senators on July 10, 2014, that will hopefully provide the answers the public deserves about the decision making process that could have essentially closed down these vital programs at the height of wildfire season.

The July 9, 2014 guidance issued by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the agency responsible for the management and allocation of DoD equipment and property, seems to ensure all firefighting equipment transfers will continue under their current, longstanding agreements. These critical programs provide much needed equipment to firefighting agencies that would otherwise be placed in storage or destroyed by DoD. In particular, the directive provided assurance that Firefighter Programs would ***“continue to receive equipment managed through these programs. Both programs will be covered by the applicable National Security Exemptions (NSEs) previously granted by EPA.”*** And that ***“DLA will notify both programs today that the temporary restriction on the release of equipment has been rescinded.”***^[1]

^[1] DLA Office of Legislative Affairs notification - July 9, 2014
http://www.dla.mil/DLA_Media_Center/Pages/newsarticle201407111550.aspx

July 24, 2014

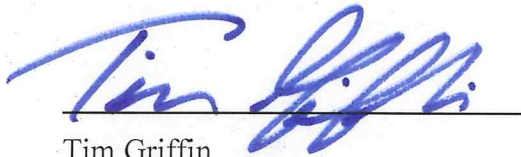
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This guidance, as well as additional assurance provided by DLA to congressional staff that it was their intent to continue providing all previously available excess equipment to local firefighting agencies, came as a great relief to our constituents who were depending on this decision to be reversed. However, since this directive was issued, new questions have emerged that demand immediate attention and guidance. We respectfully ask that you answer these questions no later than July 31, 2014:

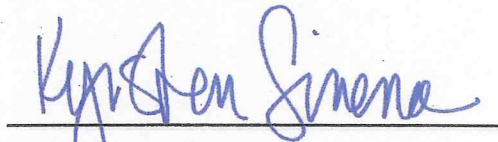
- 1) What if any additional burdens will be placed on the DLA, the U.S. Forest Service, or state and local firefighting agencies on the issue of "retitling" surplus DoD equipment? If there is a significant change in the longstanding policies with regard to vehicle titles, why is such a change necessary given the long and successful track record of the program as it currently operates?
- 2) What if any changes have been made to the guidelines and rules over the resale or transfer of excess DoD equipment provided through the FEPP and FFP to local firefighting agencies?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter. As the uncertainty about this issue is having a direct effect on local firefighting agencies, we would consider this a time sensitive matter and reiterate our request that you provide your answers to these important questions on or before July 31, 2014.

Sincerely,



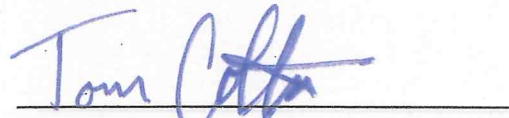
Tim Griffin
Member of Congress



Kyrsten Sinema
Member of Congress



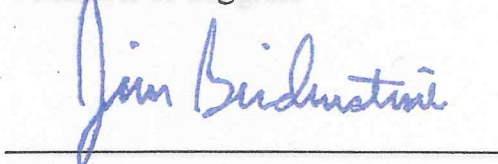
Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
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Tom Cotton
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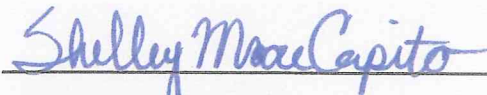
Rick Crawford
Member of Congress



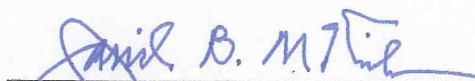
Jim Bridenstine
Member of Congress



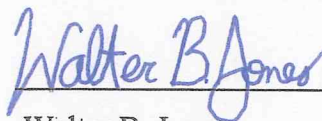
Nick J. Rahall, II
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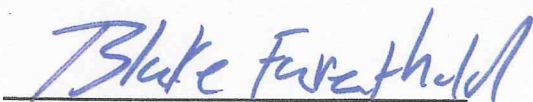
Shelley Moore Capito
Member of Congress



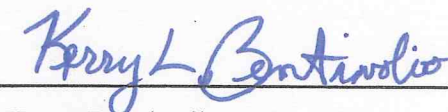
David B. McKinley
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Walter B. Jones
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Blake Farenthold
Member of Congress



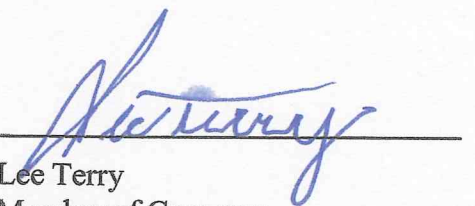
Kerry Bentivolio
Member of Congress



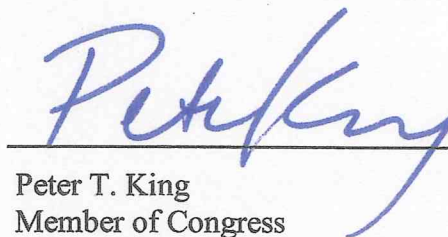
Mark Meadows
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Diane Black
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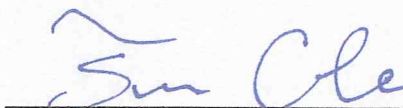
Lee Terry
Member of Congress



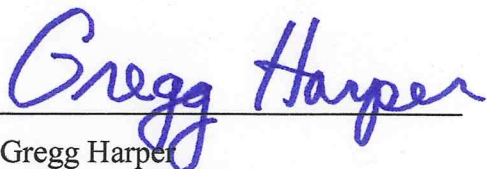
Peter T. King
Member of Congress



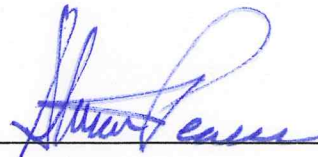
Bill Shuster
Member of Congress



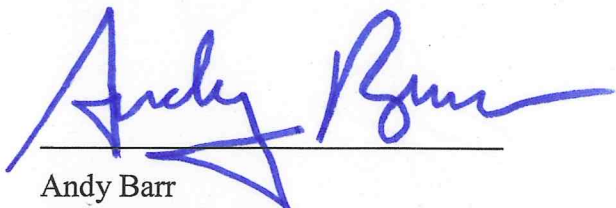
Tom Cole
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Gregg Harper
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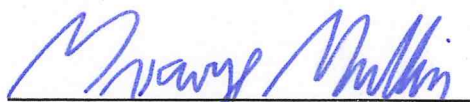
Steve Pearce
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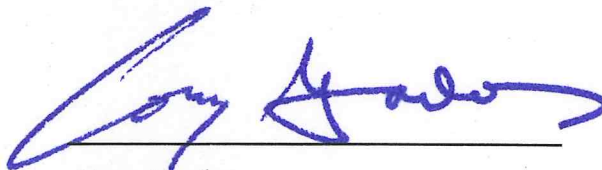
Andy Barr
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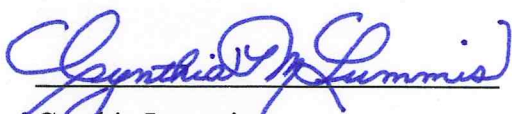
Adrian Smith
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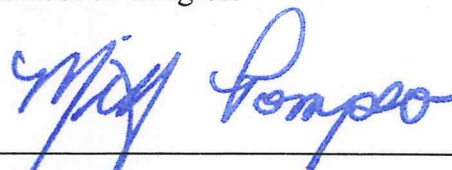
Markwayne Mullin
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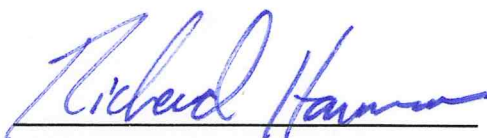
Cory Gardner
Member of Congress



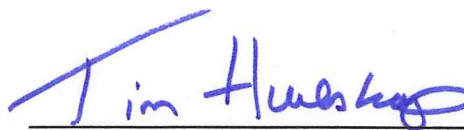
Cynthia Lummis
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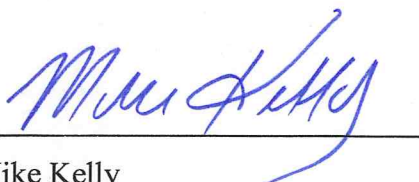
Mike Pompeo
Member of Congress



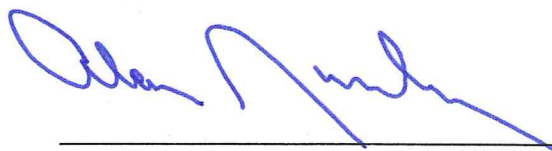
Richard Hanna
Member of Congress



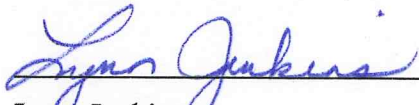
Tim Huelskamp
Member of Congress



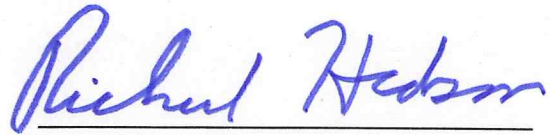
Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



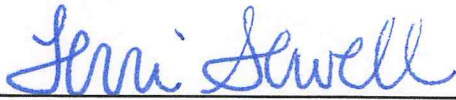
Alan Nunnelee
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Lynn Jenkins
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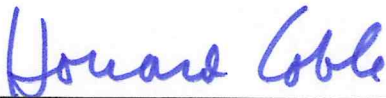
Richard Hudson
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Terri A. Sewell
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Steve Womack
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Howard Coble
Member of Congress



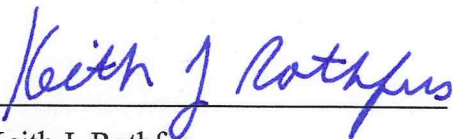
Mark E. Amodei
Member of Congress



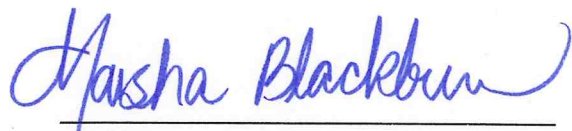
Lou Barletta
Member of Congress



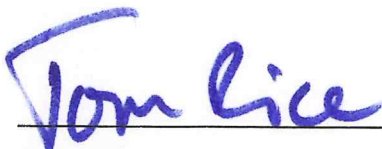
David G. Reichert
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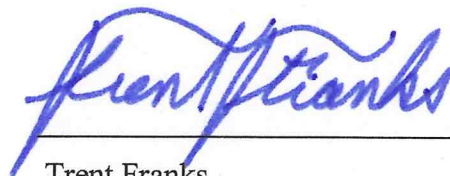
Keith J. Rothfus
Member of Congress



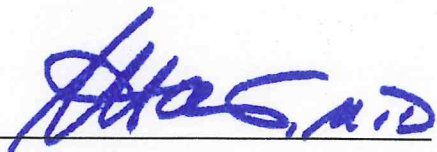
Marsha Blackburn
Member of Congress



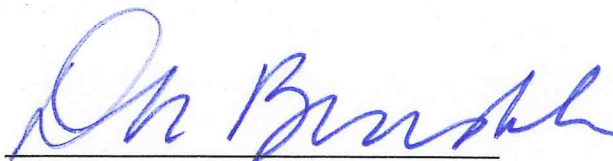
Tom Rice
Member of Congress



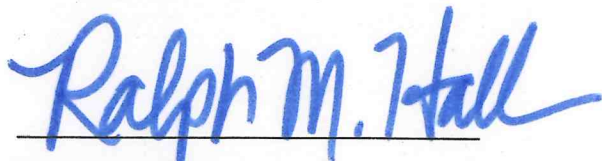
Trent Franks
Member of Congress



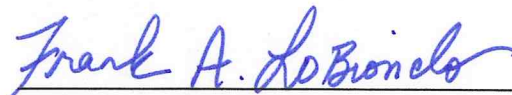
Andy Harris
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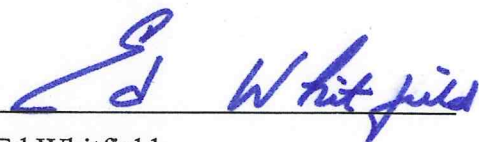
Dan Benishek
Member of Congress



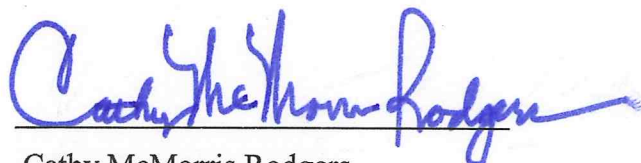
Ralph M. Hall
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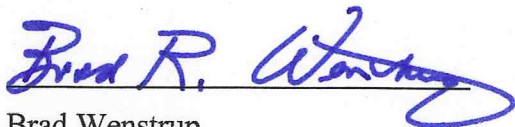
Frank A. LoBiondo
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Ed Whitfield
Member of Congress



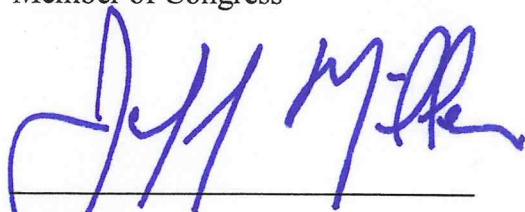
Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress



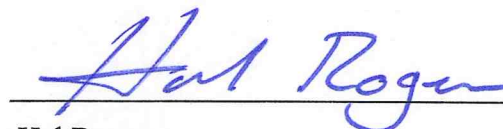
Brad Wenstrup
Member of Congress



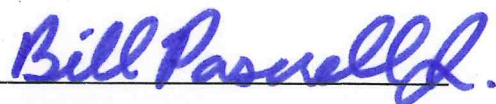
Steve Southerland, II
Member of Congress



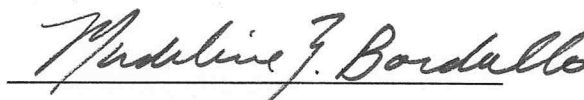
Jeff Miller
Member of Congress



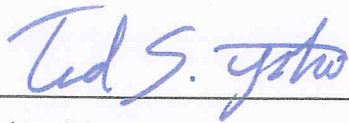
Hal Rogers
Member of Congress



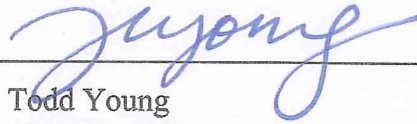
Bill Pascrell, Jr.
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Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress



Ted Yoho, D.V.M.
Member of Congress



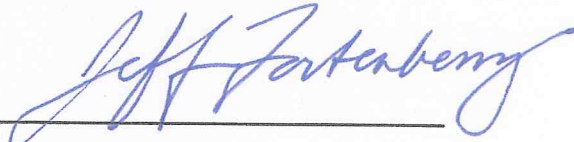
Todd Young
Member of Congress



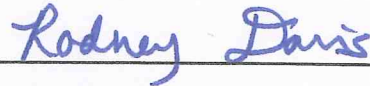
Raul Ruiz
Member of Congress



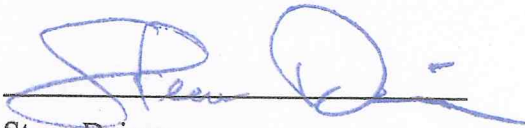
Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



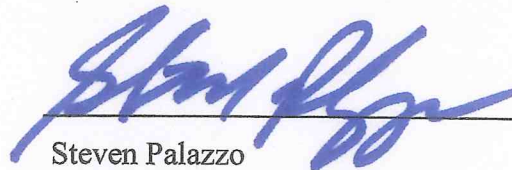
Jeff Fortenberry
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Steve Daines
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